

MERULA ALBICEPS.

Fresh examples shot in the middle of November are much handsomer birds than those obtained by Swinhoe in the middle of March, and appear to be more mature. Instead of the upper parts below the neck being dark brown they are jet-black, and the black meets across the upper breast below the white throat. In the fully adult female the rump, upper tail-coverts, and tail are dark slate-grey.

PITTA NYMPHA.

Mr. Holst obtained a female with half-developed eggs in the ovary on the 10th of May. Swinhoe obtained the type of *Pitta oreas* on the 16th of May. Mr. Holst remarks that it is found sparingly on the smaller mountains of South-west Formosa. Swinhoe obtained it from the mountains both of North and South Formosa. Mr. Holst remarks that upon dissecting it he found that it had been feeding upon beetles and small shells. Bill dark grey, paler towards the tip. Legs and feet greyish white. Irides dark brown, pupil blue. *Pitta bertæ*, from Northern Borneo, appears to me to be the same species.

Bill dark grey, paler at the tip; legs and feet greyish white, slightly brownish; orbital ring black; irides dark brown.

SCOPS HAMBROECKI.

This is a very interesting example, inasmuch as the type procured by Swinhoe in North Formosa nearly thirty years ago has hitherto been the only example known, and, being in the Norwich Museum, is not conveniently situated for students in London. It is a small bird (wing 5·6 inches long), with a very conspicuous narrow white collar round the hind neck.

XVII.—*Field-Notes on the Birds of the Estancia Sta. Elena, Argentine Republic**. By A. H. HOLLAND. *With Remarks by P. L. SCLATER.*

[MR. HOLLAND sends us the following field-notes, chiefly relating to species recently noticed at his estancia in the

* For previous paper see 'The Ibis,' 1893, p. 483.

Argentine Republic, and not previously met with there. The accompanying specimens have been examined by Sclater, who appends a few remarks.—EDD.]

1. *MIMUS PATACHONICUS* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 7).

This Mocking-bird arrives here in April, departing in spring. It lives singly or in pairs amongst the bushes, and occasionally utters a few irregular notes.

[A young female of this species (Sta. Elena, 3. v. 93), which I should not have expected to occur so far north. "Iris olive-green; legs and bill black."—P. L. S.]

2. *PROGNE FURCATA* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 24).

I have observed a pair of adults of this species all through the summer, and on January 21st I found them accompanied by two immature birds, one of which I shot. I can only conclude that they nested in an old ruined mud-house, which is never visited by anyone. It contains many holes, which are occupied by various birds in the breeding-season.

It seems very far north for this species to breed, though many pass here on migration.

3. *VIREOSYLVIA CHIVI* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 22).

A shy summer visitor, frequenting the plantations, where it passes from one tree to another searching for insects, occasionally making a short flight after these on the wing. Its note is a faint hiss twice repeated.

[Mr. Holland sends a skin of this species, which he was inclined to refer to the Tyrants. "Sta. Elena, 12. xi. 93: legs blue; iris hazel; bill dark brown, beneath bluish."—P. L. S.]

4. *DONACOSPIZA ALBIFRONS* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 49).

Fairly common throughout the winter in small companies, which frequent the dried weeds and montes. This specimen was the brightest in a flock.

[The specimen sent by Mr. Holland (♀, 29. vi. 93), and supposed by him to be a *Poospiza*, is a young bird of the allied form, *Donacospiza albifrons*.—P. L. S.]

5. *SALTATRICULA MULTICOLOR* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 61).

Some four or five of this species, all in a moulting condition, stayed here a few days in November.

[A female (Sta. Elena, 23. xi. 93) is labelled:—"Iris hazel; bill horn-colour, beneath yellow; legs brown."—P. L. S.]

6. *EMBERNAGRA PLATENSIS* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 62).

This Ground-Finch is found breeding throughout November. It makes a cup-shaped nest of fine dry grass, sometimes lined with horsehair. This is placed either under herbage on the ground, or else low down in the same.

The eggs are three in number. They are blunt in shape, and are of a white or reddish-white background, striped with numerous lines and blotched with reddish brown and pale purple at the larger end.

Molothrus bonariensis constantly lays its eggs in these nests.

7. *TRUPIALIS DEFILIPPII* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 105).

In this district De Filippi's Marsh-Starling breeds in November. It makes a cup-shaped nest of dry grass in a hollow in the ground well concealed under grass. The eggs are three or four in number, long in shape, of white or bluish white thickly spotted all over with pale reddish brown.

8. *TÆNIOPTERA IRUPERO* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 118).

A winter visitor, living singly or in pairs amongst the trees, occasionally making short turns after passing insects.

[A male (Sta. Elena, 18. iv. 93) is marked "rare." Bill, legs, and iris black.—P. L. S.]

9. *MUSCISAXICOLA MACLOVIANA* (Arg. Orn. i. p. 133).

Another winter visitor, usually found in pairs, which have some chosen post or other elevation from which they make turns after insects. They also frequent ploughed land, where they run after their prey.

[This is another southern bird which I should not have expected to occur at Sta. Elena. Mr. Holland sends a male (16. vi. 93). "Iris hazel; legs and bill black."—P. L. S.]

10. MYIODYNASTES SOLITARIUS (Arg. Orn. i. p. 150).

A shy summer visitor, frequenting the trees and taking flights after insects.

11. UPUCERTHIA DUMETORIA (Arg. Orn. i. p. 170).

A winter visitor, arriving in May and departing early in August.

[Another visitor from the south: Mr. Hudson once obtained a pair near Buenos Ayres. It is common in Patagonia.—P. L. S.]

12. SYNALLAXIS ALBESCENS (Arg. Orn. i. p. 179).

Found in pairs from September to April. The nest is placed low down in weeds or bushes, and is composed of sticks, lined with wool. In shape it is domed, with a passage leading out of the top. In building, a large cup-shaped nest is first made, which is then covered over and a tubular passage added. Eggs three or four, of a pale green colour.

13. CIRCUS MACROPTERUS (Arg. Orn. ii. p. 58).

A common Hawk here at all seasons, often seen in company with *C. cinereus*, and beating up its prey from bushes and weeds in much the same way. Its stoop is more powerful, and its longer breadth of wing enables it to fly with more despatch and in a sailing manner. It breeds in the long grass, but, so far, I have not discovered its nest.

14. BUTEO ERYTHRONOTUS (Arg. Orn. ii. p. 62).

A winter visitor, living in loose flocks and coming much about houses where there are suitable trees. It is fearless of man and easily shot. The immature birds have the breast thickly spotted with brown, and the tail brown with black bands.

[Mr. Holland sends a fine adult female specimen with a red back.—P. L. S.]

15. LARUS CIRRHOCEPHALUS (Arg. Orn. ii. p. 201).

I found this Gull nesting in company with *L. maculipennis*, though the nests were, to a certain extent, all in the

same part of the gullery, which was an enormous one in a rush-bed. The nests and eggs are similar to those of *L. maculipennis*, excepting that there is less variation in the colour of the eggs, and their average size is a shade larger.

XVIII.—Notes on the Nidification of some Indian Birds not mentioned in Hume's 'Nests and Eggs.'—Part II. By E. C. STUART BAKER, F.Z.S.

[Continued from p. 64.]

20. LIOPTILA ANNECTENS. (*Oates*, Fauna of British India, Birds, i. p. 199.)

The nest of Blyth's Sibia is a deep cup strongly, though rather loosely, built, with massive walls and base, averaging nearly 6 inches in outward diameter by some 3 in depth, and with a cavity measuring about 4 inches or less by about 1"·6 in depth. Some few nests are deeper, the cup being as much as 2"·5 internally. All the nests I have seen (now some seven or eight) appear to consist of three very distinct parts. The outer shell is formed mainly of living moss and moss-roots, more or less intermixed with a little grass, a few leaves, tendrils, weed-stems, or similar materials. Inside this, and below the true lining, is a layer of grass and roots, often much mixed with the thin soft stems of some herbaceous plant, whilst the actual lining consists of fine fern- and moss-roots, and also of the stems of maiden-hair fern. The nest of *L. capistrata* found by Captain Cock seems to have been lined in much the same manner (Hume's 'Nests and Eggs,' vol. i. p. 134). Unlike its nearest allies, which appear to place their nests in very elevated positions, this Sibia seldom builds more than 20 feet or so from the ground, generally selecting a slender branch on the outside and at the top of some small sapling standing in thin evergreen-forest. I have not, however, taken its nest from deep forest and never from open country, but have had one brought to me which the bearer said he had found in a densely-wooded hollow near the summit of a lofty grass-covered hill. The